

Testimony of
Lt. Gen. Frank G. Libutti

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Madame Chairman, Senator Kyl, and distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate this opportunity to appear before you in my role as the Special Assistant to the Interim Department of Defense Executive Agent for Homeland Security. Madame Chairman, if you will indulge me, I will make a brief opening statement and then answer any questions the Committee wishes to ask.

The Department of Defense currently views homeland security as composed of two principal elements: homeland defense and civil support.

Homeland defense is a Department of Defense-led task to protect the United States from threats and aggression in every dimension - land, sea, and air. The fighter aircraft flying combat air patrols over Washington, New York City, and other major U.S. cities under the operational control of NORAD are a prime example of a homeland defense mission.

Civil support is where the Department of Defense assists a lead federal agency, which can include such tasks as supporting the Federal Bureau of Investigation with domestic counterterrorism, the Federal Emergency Management Agency with consequence management, or Health and Human Services against biological attacks. However, we must not forget that quick resolution of such incidents begins with those on the "front line," the local and state "first responders," followed by the "second echelon," state-controlled National Guard units. Federal assets are the "third echelon" - including unique Department of Defense capabilities on a "by exception" basis.

Secretary White, the Interim Department of Defense Executive Agent for Homeland Security, outlined three major objectives that guide us:

First, the Department of Defense must unify its efforts to enhance the coordination of policy, planning, and resource allocation responsibilities as they relate to homeland security. Unity of effort will eliminate gaps and redundancies while dramatically improving our responsiveness and efficiency.

Second, we must develop operational solutions for the future. Pending revision of the Unified Command Plan, the military responsibilities for homeland security are assigned to the unified commanders on an interim basis.

The Department of Defense is exploring operational solutions for the future, but it is important to emphasize that, as we look to the future, we properly balance apportionment of forces between the needs of warfighters abroad and the need to defend the Nation at home. Striking a proper balance is absolutely critical.

Third, we must improve interagency cooperation to guarantee that the many federal, state, and local authorities with homeland security responsibilities work together swiftly and decisively. My staff and I work very closely with Governor Ridge and the Office of Homeland Security as

they engage the interagency coordination process and press forward on homeland security improvements. As we do so, we remain mindful of the broad and critical responsibilities of the Department of Defense to defend our Nation against acts of war and terrorism; provide capacity to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive incidents, whether intentional or unintentional; and supporting lead agencies in the event of natural disasters.

The National Guard, whether in State or Federal status, is an active partner in Homeland Security. Guardsmen in a state status are protecting critical infrastructures throughout the United States and supporting in consequence management efforts. State Governors, in coordination with the White House, the Department of Defense and the Federal Aviation Administration are using guardsmen to augment security at over 400 commercial airports throughout the country. Although operating under the control of the Governors, the Federal government is paying for this mission. In addition, we have plans to support the Governors of states along our northern and southern borders and the lead Federal agencies by augmenting the US Border Patrol, US Customs Service, and the Immigration Naturalization Service with guardsmen in a Title 10 or Federal status to support Federal security missions.

Thank you, Madame Chairman. This concludes my statement and I look forward to the Committee's questions.